



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
LANSING



MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN  
SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**State Board of Education Action on  
Improving Student Outcomes**

WHEREAS, leadership, general supervision, general planning and coordination of all public education are specific powers granted by the People to the State Board of Education in the State Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the Board was created to be a symbol of the partnership between the People of the State; and

WHEREAS, the Board, as representative of the People, embraces popular control through the statewide election of Board members; and

WHEREAS, the Board was established to provide for the creation and continuity of statewide policies and program; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that high school graduation requirements are not coordinated throughout the State and this fragmented situation is in need of general supervision, coordination, and leadership.

THEREFORE, by the powers granted by the People to the State Board of Education in the Constitution, the Board hereby:

1. approves the high school graduation requirements including (a) the Superintendent's recommendations for students, (b) the Michigan Merit Core, and (c) the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Applied Learning Core, as outlined in the Superintendent's memorandum dated December 7, 2005, and as modified by the Board; and
2. encourages the Legislature and Governor to enact complementary legislation.

The vote was taken on the motion.

Ayes: Austin, Bauer, Curtin, Danhof, McGuire, Straus, Turner, Weiser

The motion carried unanimously.

Adopted December 13, 2005

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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**Recommendations from the State Superintendent to the State Board of Education on Michigan  
High School Graduation Requirements  
December, 2005**

**Summary of Recommendations for Students**

***Student Graduation Requirements***

I recommend that Michigan establish the following high school graduation requirements:

- Participation in the Michigan Merit Examination or MI-Access in the spring of the junior year.
- Completion of a Michigan Merit Curriculum that includes a Michigan Merit Core and a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Applied Learning Core.
- Completion of an online credit or noncredit course or learning experience.

***Implementation of the Michigan Merit Curriculum Requirements***

- Requirements beginning with the freshman class of 2006-07 (the graduating class of 2010).  
(If legislation to support this requirement has not been signed into law by March 1, 2006, the requirement will begin with the freshman class of 2007-08.)
- District requirement to file a phase-in plan if unable to implement immediately.
- Curriculum modification allowed for students after three years in Michigan Merit Core.

## Michigan Merit Core

The Merit Core content standards may be met in a traditional course sequence or in different contexts or formats such as a Humanities course sequence, Career and Technical Education programs, or a specialized small school curriculum, or as an online course. Schools that offer courses in a different format must be prepared to demonstrate how these courses align with the Merit Core content standards and demonstrate how the content standards will be assessed. In all instances it is expected that technology, including assistive technology devices and services, will be used to deliver instruction to meet the Michigan Merit Core content standards.

<b>English Language Arts</b> 4 Credits	<b>Credits to Include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English 9 {or Humanities sequence, or CTE sequence}</li> <li>■ English 10</li> <li>■ English 11</li> <li>■ English 12</li> </ul> <p>These courses will include writing, expository writing, creative writing, grammar, informational text, speaking, representing, reading, listening, viewing, literature, culture and language.</p>
<b>Mathematics</b> 4 Credits	<b>Credits to Include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Algebra I {or Integrated Math sequence, or CTE sequence}</li> <li>■ Geometry</li> <li>■ Algebra II</li> <li>■ 1 Additional Math or Math-Related class</li> </ul> <p>(For example: Calculus, Trigonometry, Electronics, Accounting, Probability and Statistics)  Math must be taken in the Senior year.</p>
<b>Science</b> 3 Credits	<b>Credits to Include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Biology {or Integrated Science sequence, or CTE sequence}</li> <li>■ Physics or Chemistry</li> <li>■ 1 year of Additional Science</li> </ul> <p>Examples: Earth Science, Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Microbiology, Nanoscience, Oceanography, AP/IB/College for credit Sciences, Health Sciences, Agriscience, Chemistry, Physics</p>
<b>Social Science</b> 3 Credits	<b>Credits to Include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Government/Civics .5 (semester) {or Humanities sequence, or CTE sequence}</li> <li>■ Economics .5 (semester)</li> <li>■ US History (integrated with Geography)</li> <li>■ World History (integrated with Geography)</li> </ul>
<b>Health/Physical Education</b> 1 Credit	<p>Examples: Health, Personal Fitness</p>
<b>Visual and Performing Arts</b> 1 Credit	<p>Examples: Vocal and Instrumental Music, Art, Music Appreciation, Art History, Multicultural Art, Readers' Theater, and Dance</p>
<b>World Languages</b> 2 Credits	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>18 Credits</b>

# 21st Century Applied Learning Core

**All remaining elective credits must include teaching and learning of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, examples shown below.**

The following set of skill categories represent the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that all students need to know and apply for successful living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These skills permeate the **Merit Academic Core** and are enhanced by courses in the elective areas. The course content standards must incorporate one or more of the following categories. Assessments in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Applied Learning Core often involve demonstration of satisfactory performance by applying the course content standards to real-world tasks and projects, and contexts.

*\*adapted from the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*

<http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php>

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill: Global Literacy

- Understand and address global issues.
- Learn from and work with others from diverse cultures, religions, and lifestyles.
- Master non-English language skills as a tool for understanding other nations and cultures.

## Course Examples

Fine Arts  
Music and Performing Arts  
World Languages: including world languages Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Swahili, Hindi, Sign language, in addition to Spanish, French, German, etc.  
Global Studies  
Multicultural Studies: including, African American Studies, Native American Studies, Latino Studies, Asian Studies  
World Religions  
Philosophy  
Anthropology  
Sociology/Psychology  
International Business  
MVHS Online Classes  
Advanced Placement Courses  
JROTC

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill: Civic Literacy

- Participate effectively in government as an informed citizen
- Exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national and global levels.
- Understand the local and global implications of civic decisions.
- Apply 21st century skills to make intelligent choices as a citizen.

## Course Examples

Student Government  
Leadership  
Law  
Service Learning  
Legislative Internship  
Business Ethics  
MVHS Online Classes  
Advanced Placement Courses

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill: Financial, Economic, and Entrepreneurial Literacy

- Make appropriate personal economic choices.
- Understand the role of the economy and the role of business in the economy.
- Apply appropriate 21st century skills to function as a productive contributor within an organizational setting.
- Integrate oneself within and adapting continually to our nation's evolving economic and business environment.

## Course Examples

Business Technology  
Entrepreneurship, Accounting, Marketing  
Global Economics  
Junior Achievement Applied Economics  
Internships  
Life Science –Personal Living  
Financial Management  
Business Management

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill: Information and Communications Technology Literacy

- Using information and media literacy skills.
- Analyzing, accessing, managing, integrating, evaluating and creating information in a variety of forms and media.
- Understanding the role of media in society.
- Understanding, managing and creating effective oral, written and multimedia communication in a variety of forms and contexts.
- Demonstrating interpersonal and self-direction skills. Becoming more productive in accomplishing tasks and developing interest in improving own skills.

## Course Examples

Multimedia, Broadcasting, CISCO, Computer Science  
Debate and Forensics  
Oral Communication  
Journalism—Publications  
Creative Writing  
Drama  
Theater Arts  
Film and Photography  
Desktop Publishing  
Advertising  
Graphic Arts and Design  
Fine Arts  
Performing Arts—Dance, Orchestra, Marching Band, Music Technology  
MVHS Online Classes

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills

- Thinking and Problem-Solving**—Critical thinking, systems thinking, exercising sound reasoning, making complex decisions, problem identification, formulation and solution.
- Interpersonal and Self-Directional**—Teamwork and leadership; adapting to varied roles and responsibilities; working productively with others; exercising empathy; respecting diverse perspectives.
- Information and Communication**— Creativity and intellectual curiosity, information and media skills, communications skills, self direction.

## Course Examples

Electronics, Aviation, Building and Construction Trades  
Robotics  
Internships  
Work Based Learning Experiences  
Probability and Statistics  
Health Sciences  
Personal Fitness and Wellness

## Accelerated Learning

- Acknowledges that students learn at different rates
- Can occur at any time in a student's high school experience
- Can assist students in moving beyond grade level, remaining at grade level, or moving to grade level.

## Course Examples

Advanced Placement Courses  
Dual Enrollment Courses  
Online courses  
Literacy Labs  
Math Labs  
Gear Up  
Upward Bound  
Ramp Up Courses  
Mentor Reading  
2 + 2 + 2 Articulated Programs

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Applied Learning Core

**Total credits for graduation determined by district**